

The Alabama Primary

Mr. Underwood's majority, notwithstanding the larger vote by many thousands, polled in his contest than in the short term contest, was so small as to be insignificant, 1,800 in round figures, and is considered by many of his supporters as well as by his opponents a rebuke to his stand on the liquor traffic and his vote for the Esch-Cummins railroad bill, which every representative from Alabama, voted against—a bill which, among its objectionable features, takes away from the state public service commissions the right to fix interstate rates, which latter vote of his was regarded by many even of his friends as inconsistent with his contention for state rights and federal interference with those alleged rights, in his opposition to the national prohibition amendment. They could not reconcile the two votes, nor has any one attempted to do so—but prohibitionists of Montgomery, many business men and powerful factors in not only the business life but the political life of the community, notwithstanding this, though it may mean the ruin of this community as a distributing center, were willing to make the sacrifice for what they honestly believed to be the welfare of not

Alabama alone, but of the whole country. Surely Mr. Underwood cannot, and will not, be unappreciative of this self-sacrifice of leading and representative businessmen of one of the leading cities in Alabama. Those willing to make self-sacrifice for the public good deserve all praise and cannot be too highly commended, and it is to the credit of Montgomery. The Journal doubts whether the businessmen of Mr. Underwood's own city of Birmingham would have been willing to do so had they been in litigation over the question when the campaign was going on.

Mr. Underwood should take warning over the small vote he received over his leading competitor—should make him respectful of the views and wishes of those constituents back home. They have conferred upon him a high honor, if not the highest, within their gift, and this for the second time. They have confided in him a great trust. He will, no doubt, consider and have in future more regard for their wishes. If he hasn't known it in the past, his small majority which should have been at least 40,000, because of his national and international reputation, should show him not only the temper but the views of his Alabama constituency—whatever may be the wish of this or that class of interested persons here or elsewhere. To illustrate: Mr. Underwood may reasonably claim, if he disregards representative government, that he was ignorant of the wishes of the masses of the people of Alabama on the prohibition question, therefore, voted as he thought best. But the issue was squarely made in the short term senatorial contest by Governor O'Neal, and no man knows better than he this fact. O'Neal was defeated, overwhelmingly defeated, being third in the race of four, and his first and second choice votes constitute the wet vote of Alabama. That vote taken from the total vote cast in that short term contest shows the wet vote. Every man who did not vote for O'Neal as first choice, and voted for some other candidate for personal reasons, voted for O'Neal as second choice, therefore his combined vote shows the total wet vote in Alabama. O'Neal's total first and second choice vote was 34,214 and the total vote cast in the short term contest was 127,000. These figures show the dry vote to be 92,786 as against the O'Neal vote of 34,214—a majority of dries thus shown to be 58,572. This ought to be convincing and satisfying to Mr. Underwood as to the views of his constituency on this specific question. If not he would be hard to convince. But we have no doubt Mr. Underwood will recognize the popular voice back home. In fact, Mr. Underwood practically pledged himself to his prohibition supporters and to them he is indebted for his election, that he would not vote to change the Volstead act nor would he vote to resubmit the prohibition amendment, for what else could he have meant when he said that prohibition was dead and he did not like to hold a postmortem. If this is not what he meant then he didn't mean anything—except having in view the purpose to deceive the people of Alabama, and this charge against a man of Mr. Underwood's high character, would be indeed reckless, and would be naturally and very properly resented by his friends. Thousands of prohibitionists in Alabama believed he meant what he said and have insisted that what he said should go with the masses of prohibitionists, all those not "prohibition fanatics" or "political prohibitionists." There were the epithets applied to all prohibitionists who didn't see their way clear to support

Mr. Underwood who had hitherto been so consistent and irreconcilable enemy to prohibition.

In the short term contest, the issue was clearly made. O'Neal favored a repeal of the Volstead act or such modification that would mean its practical repeal, and a resubmission of the amendment to the various states and a referendum required for its adoption. All the other candidates either took the position that prohibition was settled or that it should not be disturbed, standing by the amendment and the Volstead enforcement law. The result of that contest furnishes conclusive proof as to how the people of Alabama stand—how the constituency of Mr. Underwood stands. The successful candidate for the short term, Mr. Heflin, took practically the same view of the Volstead act and the amendment as did Captain White, who ran second in the race, that the Volstead act should not be disturbed and that it was the law and should be enforced, and that the national prohibition amendment was in the constitution and is there by due process of law, and should remain there. Mr. Heflin led in the race, receiving a total of 57,718 first and second choice votes, while Mr. O'Neal, the only wet competitor, received a total of 34,234 votes, 23,458 votes less than Mr. Heflin, Captain White, another dry candidate, received a total of 43,135 first and second choice votes, also leading Mr. O'Neal, his plurality being 5,901. Thus with three candidates in the field dividing the dry vote, the wet candidate runs second to two of them, and not many votes ahead of the hindmost candidate, who, by the way, is one of the state's most deserving men and patriots, who in the race was ground between the upper and nether millstones.—Montgomery, Ala., Journal.

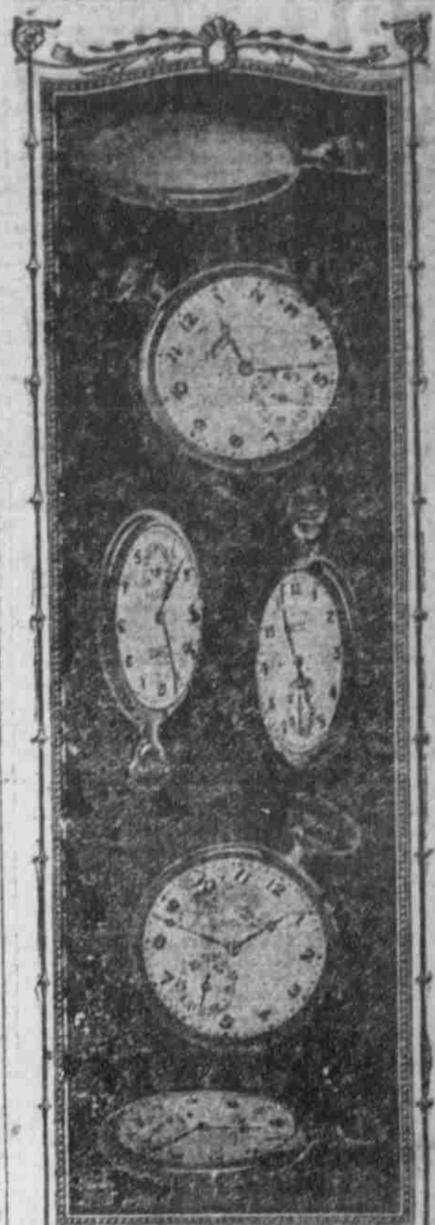
FOR ARMENIAN INDEPENDENCE

A Washington dispatch, dated June 2, says: General Torcon, who as chief of the Armenian forces on Jan. 31, 1918, proclaimed at Erzerum the independence of Armenia and came to the United States hoping that he might be able to lead back an Armenian legion to fight for the defense of Armenia, issued a statement here tonight in which he declared, he was not surprised that the American Senate had refused authority for an American mandate over Armenia.

General Torcon declared the plan for foreign mandates over Armenia had been brought forward by Armenian politicians and asserted that the dilemma now confronting Armenians lies with the National Armenian Delegation at Paris, and especially with Bogos Nubar, who had for five years, he said, neglected every opportunity offered the Armenians for the formation of a national military force for self-defense.

"I was present yesterday," said General Torcon, "in the Senate during the discussion of the Armenian question. The refusal of the American mandate over Armenia did not in any way surprise me. Personally, I have never been partisan to any foreign mandate over Armenia.

"As one of the signatories of the proclamation of Armenian independence at Erzerum on Jan. 31, 1918, and simply as a soldier, I find that the words 'independence' and 'foreign mandate' annul one another. The system of mandates was put forward by Armenian politicians. It was bad tactics. The fiasco to which it has led is conclusive proof of this. Since the conclusion of the armistice I have not ceased to advocate, in England as in the United States, the formation of an Armenian army to inspire respect for the independence of the country."



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